

STUDY ON WORK LIFE BALANCE OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN HOSPITALS AT COIMBATORE CITY

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ABSTRACT

At present every successful employee has to pass through the dilemma of work life balance in personal and professional life. For the sake of leading a successful life, people do not hesitate to give extra time for achieving the objectives of life. In the process of getting extra mileage in their professional life they have to make a lot of compromise and sometimes mental peace also gets distorted. It is very challenging for the working women to maintain a proper balance between work and family commitments. Due to their busy work schedules majority of the women often struggle to achieve work life balance. Women in the workforce frequently report that their lives have become a juggling act due to their multiple personal and professional responsibilities. A positive work- life balance gives employees a feel of job satisfaction towards their work and increase their productivity. Good quality work- life balance will reduce employee retention. The hospital administration need to create a conducive environment at workplace so that female employees are able to achieve a proper balance between personal life and professional life. Work-life balance concept plays a very important role in organizational success. Work-life balance is seen in a different way in different society. Indian health industry scenario is growing very fast. India has an outstanding network in health service providers both in rural and urban areas. In this backdrop, the article is aimed to empirically evaluate the work life balance of women employees in the hospitals of Coimbatore city. The study has adopted survey by questionnaire methodology to collect data from the respondents.

INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance is a concept, which includes proper prioritizing the task between “Work” and “Life”. It requires attainment of equilibrium between professional work and personal work. The issue of work-life balance was earlier raised by the working women during the 1960s and 1970s in the UK. During the mid-1980s, the issue was also taken into consideration by the US

government. In 1990, US confirmed the recognition of work-life balance as a main human resource management issue (Bird, 2006). Job satisfaction is a component of life satisfaction that can only happen if employees can accomplish a stability in their work and family life.

In the broader perspective WLB is also termed as “life style balance”. Due to urbanization and modernization, Indian families are undergoing rapid transformation. In India, women from various segments of society have entered the workforce. Women in India, particularly in urban areas, are exploring the various educational institution opportunities available to them. This has paved the way for greater awareness and increased aspirations for personal development. Women are required to simultaneously fulfill an accumulation of diverse roles, each with its own unique pressure. Multiple role-playing has been found to have both positive and negative effects on the physical and mental health of working women. WLB in broadest sense can be understood as the prioritization of work with personal chores. Reportedly, women with multiple roles have better physical and psychological health than those with fewer responsibilities. WLB is a global phenomenon for most employees, who are struggling in balancing domains of work and life. Although the concept of WLB and its research has evolved from the west and other advanced countries, the issue is no longer restricted to them. Already, most employees are witnessing work-life merge where work obligations are merged with life responsibilities. The merge of work and life domains owes to technological innovation in the work space-telecommunicating, high-speed internet and other facilities. The spatial separation between work and life which was physical is getting blurred, giving way to virtual space. Work-life balance has become an interesting topic worldwide. Nowadays work-life balance was discussed by many researchers, academicians, business organizations and social environment due to its effects on professional and personal life domains. Work-life Balance is an ability to balance between their Professional (work) Life and Personal Life. The biggest challenge for women is how to balance the demands of family and career. Work Life Balance of Women health care employees has become an important subject since the women are equally sharing the earning responsibility for the betterment of their family affect rapid changes in Indian families. Early centuries women were mostly confined to their kitchens. At present, Indian women's exposure to educational opportunities is substantially higher than decades ago, especially both in the urban and rural areas. Women are getting into jobs and they continue to work even after marriage. A married woman has more responsibility than a man in taking care of young children and family. The working women efficiently overcome difficult situations through their commitment and diligence. The participation of women in income generation activities lends them to satisfy their home needs to a greater extent. Women health care employees may struggle with work-life balance because of the nature of the job, long hours and shift work commitments. They should

pay extra attention to managing work-life balance to ensure they derive maximum satisfaction from their work while maintaining a healthy lifestyle. In order to achieve a balanced work-life, women nurses have to prioritize their work demands in Professional, Personal and family life. Evidence shows that balanced work life creates accord in both professional and personal life; an imbalance can create a negative impact on personal life. Healthcare is the sector focusing on patients' well-being. This sector is most significant for any nation for this matter. Hence heavy investments are made by all governments in healthcare industry. The challenges in the industry are technological changes, more new diseases, and the search for new medicines, dedicated trained doctors and caring nurses. The dedicated staff's involvement and commitment are more important. But the issue work life balance of hospital female employees are being a threat to the hospitals. Hence the quality of services of employees are directly related to certain factors like work life balance too.

INDIAN HOSPITALS

Hospitals in India have been organized along British lines with strict hierarchical structure. The term hospital means an establishment for a temporary stay of by the sick and injured during the period of treatment. Let us look through a few definitions of the term hospital. According to the directory of hospitals in India, 1988, "A hospital is an institution which is run for the medical, surgical and / or obstetrical care of in patients. There are hospitals run by the Central / State Government /Local body or licensed by the appropriate authority."

The *World Health Organization* defines modern hospitals thus: "The modern hospital is an integral part of social and medical organization, the function of which is to provide complete health care both curative and preventive to the public whose outpatient services reach out to the family in its home environment. The hospital is also a center for training of healthcare workers and for bio-social research."

WOMEN EMPLOYEES – BASIC NATURE

Women nurses' are playing an important role in determining the quality and cost of healthcare. It is argued that they have the potential to be part of solutions to key problems in health care systems. Work life balance and organizational commitment for nurses are paramount importance for them because, they are playing crucial role in their organizations performance and their family wellbeing (D.Sakthivel & J.Jayakrishnan, 2006). With such nature women employees are managing their aging factor and their family commitment too.

ROLE OF FEMALE IN HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY

It is universally understood that in health care sector female employees takes major part. It is proven that female is more suitable in services for health care sector. Healthcare sector is more about healing and caring. The patients should be treated with much care. The patients need morale support and care when they are either ill or injured. Female are more suitable to work with kindness and care. They can show love and affection to the patients. This fact is accepted and hence female also experiences comfortableness in being associated with healthcare sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Enormous studies have addressed to work-life balance issue in different perspectives. Some of the papers related to this subject are reviewed.

Munn (2009), Work-life balance is defined as a person who prioritizes their work, family, individual, and community responsibilities. The means and way to prioritize individual work, family, personal and community responsibilities are influenced by the availability and knowledge of work-life initiatives as well as the organizational culture.

Tomazevic, Kozjek, and Stare, (2014) has discussed both positive and negative consequences as a result of both work-life balance and work-life imbalance. If there is balance in work-life, employees get motivation and job satisfaction increases while imbalance creates dissatisfaction among employees. Work-life balance has a positive consequence; imbalance in work-life has numerous negative consequences for both employees and employers.

White M. et. al. highlighted the parameters in their paper titled 'High-performance Management Practices, Working Hours and Work-Life Balance regarding selected high- performance practices and working hours on work-life balance, analysed with data from national surveys of British workers in 1992 and 2000. Alongside long hours, which are a constant source of negative job-to-home spill over, certain 'high performance' practices have become more strongly related to negative spill over during this period.

Crooker et. al (2002) have studied in their paper titled 'The relationship between life complexity and dynamism that affect work-life balance'. The authors have explained individual value systems on the relationship between life complexity and work- life balance.

According to **Guest (2002)**, the determinants of 'work life balance are located in the work and home contexts'. Contextual determinants include demands of work, culture of work, demands of home and culture of home. In the present era of technology innovations, it is quite challenging to prioritize official and personal work. In the past it has been observed that poor WLB leads to stress and unhappiness, which results in poor productivity of employees.

Mani (2013) identified the key factors that influence the WLB of women professionals in India.

These factors include role conflict, a lack of recognition, organizational politics, gender discrimination, elderly and child care issues, poor health, time management issues, and a lack of adequate social support.

According to **Eaton (2003)** employees consider work and family policies to be key variables in organizations where supervisors are more flexible than in organizations with formal policies regarding annual leave, sick leave, etc. Furthermore, Morgan and **Milliken (1992)** discovered that career planning, alternative work arrangements, and offsite working arrangements are important factors that help employees balance their personal and professional lives. Furthermore, some researchers have identified three types of work-life policies, including parental leave, alternative work arrangements, and employer-sponsored child care.

Kossek et al. (1998) studied employer work-life policies and practices as potential organizational change phenomena. They have observed that work-life policies assist in improving the organizational structure and cultural support for work, family, and personal life. Structural support comes in the form of job redesign, reduced workloads, occupational safety, and formal policies on absenteeism, vacations, and sick time, whereas cultural support comes in the form of informal workplace social and relational support from supervisors and coworkers. Previous research concentrated on the conflicts brought on by family at work.

Kinnunen and Mauno, 1998; Eby et al., 2005 Individual determinants include work orientation (i.e. the extent to which work (or home) is a central life interest), personality, energy, personal control and coping, gender and age, life and career stage. The variables of the study are under the contextual determinants, which are leave policy and service delivery. The leave policy is the culture of work, while the service delivery is the demand of work. The issue of work-life balance has become the hot topic in present scenario.

Sverko et al. (2002) emphasized that changes in technology, values and demographic trends contributed to the emergent relevance of work-life balance in industrialized societies. It is supplemented by other factors which include increasing complexity of work, change in nature of family and the extended number of women entering the workforce. Work-life balance refers to the divergence between the work place demands and the demands of personal life. When either side becomes unbalanced for extended periods of time, the effect is likely to be visible in unhealthy symptoms (fatigue, stress, depression, etc.). A lack of synchronization between domestic life and work life causes great personal and financial hardship, both to the individual and the company. In the competitive era, organizations are under competitive pressure to achieve high productivity and require employees with healthy work-life balance as an employee with good work-life balance will be in a position to contribute more towards the organizational growth and success.

Naithani, 2010 Therefore it is a high time for employers to draw out strategies and help the women employees to enjoy their work and live life to the fullest. The outcomes of imperfect work-life balance faced in the day-to-day life are stress. Employees must be ever performing and ever learning to adapt themselves to the dynamic market conditions. Adding to this is the constant pressure from the superiors to meet the targets. Thus, employees have no other choice but to sacrifice their personal space.

Higgins & Duxbury, (1992) found that the challenges of balancing work and family affect both males and females and women reported higher level of difficulty and related stress. **Wise (2003)** reported that there was low awareness of work-life balance by business and employees and work-life balance policies are often poorly understood by both line managers and employees, and that family friendly or flexible work arrangements are more commonly found in larger organizations and in the public sector.

Allen, et al. (2000) found that when work-family conflict increased, job satisfaction decreased, and that this was true for individuals of both genders in a variety of professions, career stages, and countries.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the influence of work- life balance on performance.
2. To find out the impact of work life balance on job satisfaction.
3. To understand barriers to work- life balance.
4. To know the interventions and strategies uses to manage work stress and maintain work- life balance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Women employees working in Corporate Hospitals in Coimbatore City, Tamilnadu were selected as a sample for conducting the study. The sample comprised of 100 respondents. The data collection techniques used in this study are using instrument in the form of questionnaires. Data were collected by using primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaire method. Secondary data were collected from various journals, articles and websites.

SAMPLE DESIGN

The nature of the study is descriptive with an attempt to understand the impact of work- life balance on job satisfaction of nurses working in Private Hospitals. For selecting the 100 sample, convenient sampling method was used.

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The universe of the study comprises of Corporate Hospitals in Coimbatore City.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

A structured questionnaire has been used for the study. Research was conducted by using questionnaires method. Simple percentage technique was used to analyze the collected data.

Table 1: Demographic details of the respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age (years)		
20- 30	51	51%
30- 40	24	24%
40- 50	14	14%
Above 50	11	11%
Total	100	100%
Marital Status		
Married	62	62%
Unmarried	38	38%
Divorced	0	0
Total	100	100%
Educational Qualification		
Master's Level	9	9%
Bachelor's Level	30	30%
Diploma	61	61%
Total	100%	100%
Salary		
Below Rs. 15,000	27	27%
Rs. 15,000 – Rs. 30,000	61	61%
Rs. 30,000- Rs. Rs 45,000	9	9%
Above Rs. 45,000	3	3%
Total	100	100%
Total Work Experience		
0-5 years	23	23%
5-10 years	28	28%
10- 15 years	35	35%
Above 15 years	14	14%
Total	100	100%

Table 2: Opinion towards work life balance and job satisfaction have strong relation

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Extremely agree	90	90%
Somewhat disagree	6	6%
Neutral	4	4%
Somewhat agree	0	0
Extremely agree	0	0
TOTAL	100	100%

Table 3: Influence of good work- life balance dimensions to job satisfaction

Variables	Optimized work schedule	Strong social support system	Time management	Proper personalized plan	Work recognition	Support from management and colleagues	Salary and other monetary benefits
To a great extent	85	5	72	44	95	73	95
Some what	12	30	24	24	5	22	5
Very little	3	10	4	23	0	5	0
Not at all	0	5	0	9	0	0	0

Table 4: Reasons for increased work stress

Variables	Shift hours	Patient needs	Work load
To a great extent	92	65	68
Some extent	5	30	12
Very little	2	5	20
Not at all	1	0	0
TOTAL	100	100	100

Table 5: Suggestions towards intervention and strategies can used for maintaining work-lifebalance which led to job satisfaction.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Identify specific stressors	45	45%
Take time for self-care	12	12%
Personal professionalboundaries	11	11%
Effective communication	10	10%
Rest and sleep	22	22%
TOTAL	100	100%

FINDINGS

- Table 1, the data revels that majority i.e., 51% of the respondents belongs to the age group of 20to 30 years and 24% of the respondents belong to the age group of 30-40 years. The data indicates that majority of them are from middle age group. Most of the respondents i.e., 62% of them are married. Most of the respondents i.e., 61% of them are studied Diploma and 30% of them are studied Bachelor’s level. Majority i.e., 61% of the respondents are drawing a salary of Rs. 15,000to Rs. 30,000/. Most of the respondents i.e., 35% have 10 to 15 years of total work experience.
- Table 2, the data reveals that respondents believe that work- life balance and job

satisfactions have strong relation. Here, the majority of the respondents i.e., 90% of them extremely agreed with this statement. They said that if they are free from work stress/burden, then only they can manage their work and family responsibility which leads them to job satisfaction.

- Table 3, the data reveals the opinion of respondents about influence of good work- life balance towards job satisfaction. Majority 85% of the respondents opined that optimized work schedule led to job satisfaction to a great extent. From the same 100% of the respondents, 55% of them believe that to some extent strong social support system would help to manage work- life responsibility which would increase the job satisfaction level also, 72% of them said that proper time management at work place help to reduce work burden thereby employee would have job satisfaction. 44% of the respondents said that personalized plan helps them maintain work life balance. 95% of the respondents believe that work recognition through increased salary, promotion etc. enhances job satisfaction level. 73% of the respondents opined that support from management and colleagues would help them to discharge their responsibility in a feasible way, this would help them to show high level of job satisfaction at work place. 95% of the respondents opined that salary and other monetary benefits also enhance their job satisfaction level.
- Table 4, data reveals 92% of the respondents said that the reasons for increased work stress due to long work shift hours would affect their work life balance to a great extent. 65% of them said that meeting patient needs made them emotionally weak to a greater extent which might be the reason for work stress. 68% of them felt that the increased work load might be the reason for work stress.
- Table 5, data reveals that the respondents' suggestions towards intervention and strategies used for maintaining work life balance which gives more job satisfaction at work place. On that majority i.e. 45% of the respondents suggested that by identifying specific areas of stresses in work and family life would help to maintain work- life balance, 12% of them said that taking time for self-care would help to deal with stress in the work place, 11% of the respondents opined that establishing personal professional boundaries may help to prevent personal or family matters from disrupting work, 22% of them feel that proper rest and sleep will make a difference and 10% of them said that effective communication is a significant tool in managing work stress because they have to communicate with various professionals, patients and their family members about illness, diagnoses and treatment. So, clarity in communication would help to manage various confusions and

misunderstandings which would help to reduce work stress. 5% of the respondents said that maintaining sound nutrition and exercises helps to clear the mind and prevent unwanted physical effects of stress such as heart problems and diabetes.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of the study, would like to give following suggestions,

- Women employees in hospitals should learn about way of managing work stress, and then only they can have work- life balance and job satisfaction.
- Health care job is a more stressful job and there may be more chances of work burnout in their profession. So, they need strong support from family and society to manage this.
- Hospital management should arrange various programs to their hospital women employees to manage their stress level which will help them to give good services in their work and also it will lead them to have job satisfaction.
- Women employees should know how to schedule their work and personal life responsibility properly. Then only they can manage their responsibility without any hurdles and also spend their leisure time by involving various activities like yoga/ Meditation, gardening, spend time with family / friends.
- They should learn how to make their mind always happy and tension free.

CONCLUSION

A good work- life balance status always indicates increased job satisfaction of employees. The present study also intended to study the impact of work- life balance of women employees' on job satisfaction. They opined the study that there would be connection between work-life balance and job satisfaction. Therefore, good quality of work life always motivates women employees of hospitals in Coimbatore to do better services in their work place, spent their time with family members / friends and also discharge responsibility meaningfully. Both management and each individual should know proper strategies to enhance quality of work life.

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